Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A fusion polypeptide for expression in a host cell, wherein the fusion polypeptide has a basic structure, in sequence, an N-terminus, a ~~comprising a~~ TolAIII domain or a functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof, ~~and~~ a non-TolA protein partner, and a ~~polypeptide, wherein the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof is located towards the N-terminus of the fusion polypeptide and the non-TolA polypeptide is located towards the~~ C-terminus, and wherein ~~of~~ the fusion polypeptide optionally comprises an affinity purification tag.

2. (original) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 1, further comprising a signal peptide.

3. (original) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 2, in which the signal peptide is located at or near the N-terminus of the fusion polypeptide.

4. (previously presented) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 1, wherein the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof has been codon-optimised for expression in the host cell.

5. (currently amended) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 1, further comprising a linker between the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof and the non-TolA protein partner ~~polypeptide~~.

6. (original) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 5, wherein the linker comprises at least one cleavage site for an endopeptidase.

7. (previously presented) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 6, wherein the cleavage site comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3 and/or SEQ ID NO: 4 and/or SEQ ID NO: 5.

8. (previously presented) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 1, further comprising an affinity purification tag.

9. (original) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 8, wherein the affinity purification tag is located at or near the N-terminus of the fusion polypeptide.

10. (original) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 9, wherein the affinity purification tag is an N-terminal His_n tag, with n=4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10 (SEQ ID NOs: 6-12, respectively; preferably n=6 [SEQ ID NO: 8]), optionally with the His_n tag linked to the fusion polypeptide by one or more Ser residues (preferably 2).

11. (previously presented) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 1, wherein the TolAIII domain consists of amino acid residues 329-421 of SEQ ID NO: 13 of the Escherichia coli TolA sequence (SwissProt Acc. No. P19934).

12. (previously presented) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 1, wherein the host cell is bacterial (for example, Escherichia coli).

13. (currently amended) The fusion polypeptide according to claim 1, wherein the non-TolA protein partner~~polypeptide~~ is BCL-XL.

14. (previously presented) A DNA molecule encoding the fusion polypeptide as defined in claim 1.

15. (previously presented) The DNA molecule according to claim 14, wherein the

mRNA properties of the DNA molecule when transcribed are optimised for expression in the host cell.

16. (previously presented) An expression vector comprising the DNA molecule according to claim 14 for expression of the fusion polypeptide.

17. (original) The expression vector according to claim 16, having an inducible promoter (for example, the IPTG-inducible T7 promotor) which drives expression of the fusion polypeptide.

18. (previously presented) The expression vector according to claim 16, having an antibiotic resistance marker (for example, the bla gene, which confers resistance to ampicillin and chloramphenicol).

19. (currently amended) A cloning vector for producing the expression vector defined in claim 16, comprising DNA encoding the TolAIII domain or a functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof upstream or downstream from a cloning site which allows in-frame insertion of DNA encoding a non-TolA protein partner~~polypeptide~~.

20. (previously presented) The cloning vector according to claim 19, further comprising DNA encoding at least one cleavage site (for example, the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3 and/or SEQ ID NO: 4 and/or SEQ ID NO: 5) for an endopeptidase, the cleavage site located between the DNA encoding the TolAIII domain or a functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof and the cloning site.

21. (previously presented) The cloning vector according to claim 19, wherein the cloning site comprises at least one restriction endonuclease (for example, BamHI and/or KpnI) target sequence.

22. (previously presented) The cloning vector according to claim 19, further comprising DNA encoding an affinity purification tag.

23. (previously presented) The cloning vector according to claim 19, further comprising an inducible promoter (for example, the IPTG-inducible T7 promotor).

24. (previously presented) The cloning vector according to claim 19, further comprising DNA encoding an antibiotic resistance marker (for example, the bla gene, which confers resistance to ampicillin and chloramphenicol).

25. (previously presented) The cloning vector according to claim 19, having the structure of pTolE, pTolT or pTolX (as shown in FIG. 2 with reference to the description).

26. (previously presented) Use of the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof for production of a fusion polypeptide as defined in claim 1.

27. (previously presented) Use of the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof for production of the DNA molecule as defined in claim 14.

28. (previously presented) Use of the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof for production of an expression vector as defined in claim 16.

29. (previously presented) Use of the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof for production of a cloning vector as defined claim 19.

30. (currently amended) A host cell containing the DNA as defined in claim 14

and/or an expression vector comprising the DNA molecule for expression of the fusion peptide and/or an cloning vector for producing the expression vector which comprises DNA encoding the TolAIII domain or a functional homologue fragment, or derivative thereof upstream or downstream from a cloning site which allows in-frame insertion of DNA encoding a non-TolA protein partner~~polypeptide~~.

31. (currently amended) Use of the fusion polypeptide as defined in claim 5 for immobilisation of the non-TolA protein partner~~polypeptide~~, comprising the step of: binding the fusion polypeptide to a TolA binding polypeptide (e.g. the TolA-recognition site of colicin N or other colicins, the TolA binding region of bacteriophage g3p-D1 protein, or the TolA binding region of TolB or other Tol proteins).

32. (currently amended) Use of the fusion polypeptide as defined in claim 9 for immobilisation of the non-TolA protein partner~~polypeptide~~, comprising the step of: binding the affinity tag of the fusion polypeptide to a binding moiety.

33. (currently amended) Use of the fusion polypeptide as defined in claim 5 for purification and isolation of the non-TolA protein partner~~polypeptide~~, comprising the steps of: (i) binding the fusion polypeptide to a TolA binding polypeptide (e.g. the TolA-recognition site of colicin N or other colicins, the TolA binding region of bacteriophage g3p-D1 protein, or the TolA binding region of TolB or other Tol proteins); (ii) cleaving the non-TolA protein partner ~~polypeptide~~ from the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof using an endopeptidase; and (iii) separating the cleaved non-TolA protein partner ~~polypeptide~~ from the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof.

34. (currently amended) Use of the fusion polypeptide as defined in claim 8 for purification and isolation of the non-TolA protein partner~~polypeptide~~, comprising the steps of: (i) binding the affinity tag of the fusion polypeptide to a binding moiety; (ii) cleaving the non-TolA protein partner ~~polypeptide~~ from the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof using an endopeptidase; and (iii) separating

the cleaved non-TolA protein partner ~~polypeptide~~ from the TolAIII domain or functional homologue, fragment, or derivative thereof.

35. (currently amended) Use of the fusion polypeptide as defined in claim 1 for studying interaction properties of the non-TolA protein partner ~~polypeptide~~ or the fusion polypeptide, for example self-interaction, interaction with another molecule, or interaction with a physical stimulus.

36. (previously presented) A method for high expression of a polypeptide as a fusion polypeptide in a host cell, comprising the step of expressing the polypeptide as a fusion polypeptide as defined in claim 1 in a host cell.